The Southern PATRIOT

Vol. 14. No. 10 Published by the Southern Conference Educational Fund, Inc. December, 1956

The Safety Dog: A TV Tale for Tots

There is a television station in a city named New Orleans. It is a very powerful station called WDSU-TV, but it is run by frightened men. These men have money and talent, but they are frightened just the same.

A so-called Senator from a place named Mississippi scared these people last Spring by painting one of their leaders Red. This man didn't know the difference between Black and White. He does not work at WDSU-TV anymore.

Now there is a little girl in New Orleans named Virgie Ranson. She is twelve years old. She goes to St. Raymond Catholic School. She is a Negro.

She did not know WDSU-TV was frightened. She listened every Sunday morning to a program run by a man called Captain Sam. And when Captain Sam offered a great big fuzzy dog as prize for the child who sent in the best safety jingle, Virgie mailed him one.

A few days later Virgie's mother received a telephone call from Captain Sam saying Virgie had won the dog, so could Virgie come to the station next Sunday and be on Captain Sam's show?

Of course, she could. It was the biggest excitement of Virgie's life, and all her friends and family made plans to watch Virgie over big, powerful WDSU-TV.

But when Virgie and her mother came to the station, Captain Sam saw they were Black. The station workers and the program manager saw they were Black. And they remembered what the so-called Senator had done to the man who didn't know the differnce between Black and White. They got more frightened than ever.

They offered to give Virgie her great big fuzzy dog in the hall under the stairs. But Virgie's mother had not brought her to get a dog in the hall under the stairs. She told Captain Sam, the children's friend, to keep his dog.

Happily our story does not end here. There is a newspaper in New Orleans called the **Louisiana Weekly**. The editors published the story about Virgie Ranson on the front page.

Now the sponsor of Captain Sam's TV show is a pie company. Lots of Black

(Continued on Page 2.)

VIRGIE RANSON
. . . and the scared men

Anti-Eastland Vote Cost Democrats South

By all accounts, the unprecedented defeat suffered by the Democratic presidential candidate in the various Southern states came from the protest vote of Negroes, expressing their censure of a party that allows a Senator Eastland to throttle civil rights legislation.

Democratic strategists meeting in Washington late in November reportedly acknowledged that they must assume a more positive position regarding racial issue, and several "liberal" senators have announced plans to ban filibustering at the next session of Congress.

However, the composition and the leadership of the Senate remain virtually unaltered and there is little evidence that the respective floor leaders, Johnson and Knowland, won't throttle reform efforts as smoothly as they have in the past.

An interesting indication of the increasing solidarity of Negro voting occurred in New Orleans. In last January's Democratic primary a N.O. Negro attorney running for a state office received 18,500 votes in the city. In last month's election a Negro candidate for the N.O. school board got 26,500 votes and finished third in a field of six. This increase of nearly 50 per cent in a ten-month period seems to indicate a growing unity against the repressive legislation that the state has adopted. It does not bode well for the political futures of those who are championing such laws.

Ole Santa Claus Will Come...

Ole Santa Claus will come, if just you wait,
He'll ride the bus and sit in front.
Ole Santa Claus will come, if just you hope,
He'll bring you what you really want.

Ole Santa Claus will come, if you don't fear,
He'll give the children one big school.
Ole Santa Claus will come, if you don't cry,
He'll share the load of man and mule.

When Santa comes, O burn your mourning clothes!
Life won't be black for any man.
When Santa comes, O heap the table high!
Life won't be bare of loving plan.

Till Santa came, O Lord, it'd been a spell!
We nearly let the lamp burn down.
Till Santa came, O Lord, we had a time!
It was all dark, no friendly sound.

—ALFRED MAUND

Victories Scored In Two Big Cases

Court decisions last month crowned with victory two long-enduring battles for human dignity in the South.

The first was the U.S. Supreme Court's edict outlawing segregation on transit buses—a triumph for the Montgomery bus boycotters.

The second was the dismissal of all sedition, conspiracy, etc., charges against the "Louisville defendants"—the seven white people who aroused the wrath of the law for helping a Negro couple purchase a home in an "all-white" neighborhood.

The Supreme Court decision came on Nov. 15, the same day an Alabama Circuit Court judge issued an injunction forbidding the Montgomery Improvement Assn. to use its station wagon car pool.

The MIA voted to end the boycott, but then the delay in arrival of formal notice from the Supreme Court created a period of indecision. (The court refused to waive the usual 25-day lag between ruling and writ and Dec. 12 was seen as the earliest date for the action to become official.) In the interim, the Alabama WCC and the head of the state public service commission issued threats; the KKK staged daytime demonstrations in Montgomery—and the boycott, to all in-

(Continued on Page 2.)

Teachers Not Even Safe in Church

Louisiana has a new teacher tenure law which, to quote, the Colfax **Chronicle**, "makes it pretty risky for a teacher to belong to any organization at all except a church or the National Guard."

And, the paper says, several teachers resigned from the Colfax Parent-Teacher Assn. after a "long hard look at the anti-NAACP state law."

A letter from Carroll Buck, special assistant attorney general, to a school board official, verifies this state of affairs.

Buck says that dismissal can be made for:

"Being a member of or of contributing to any group, organization, movement or corporation that is by law or injunction prohibited from operating in the state of Louisiana.

"Advocating or in any manner performing any act toward bringing about integration of the races within the public school system or any public institution of higher learning of the state of Louisiana."

The NAACP is the only corporation so far to have been banned by a state court, the action being taken under an old anti-KKK statute which requires club, fraternal organizations, etc., to file membership lists.

Buck's letter makes reference to this law (RS 12:401) and he says, "If, therefore, the National Education Assn. or the National Parent-Teachers Assn. is operating in this state, and fails to conform with the requirements of RS 12: 401, membership or contribution to such organizations would subject a permanent teacher to removal.

"We are not sufficiently advised as to the activities of such associations and cannot therefore state whether they are operating in this state, but since the law only excludes regularly organized churches or National Guard organizations, this necessarily means that such other organizations are included within the intendment of the law."

However, when Buck discusses what constitutes a pro-integration act by an individual, this alleged religious freedom accorded Louisiana's teachers becomes severely crimped. He says:

"It may well be that a religious organization through its governing authority might advocate integration . . . but it is our opinion that if such a member does nothing in the way of advocating integration or performing any act looking to that end, such a permanent teacher could not be removed from office on that account.

"But on the contrary, . . . if such a member does advocate integration as a church policy within the church as a member thereof, such a member would be subject to the provisions of the act."

In other words, the teachers are permitted to be church members—if they are not very **good** members.

LONE FLORIDIAN IS SANITY'S DEFENDER

REP. JOHN B. ORR, JR.
. . . alone in the crowd

The attitude of Southern legislatures toward segregation has become virtually standard: the greater the unconstitutionality of a repressive measure, the more unanimous is the vote in favor of it.

Rare is the elected official who dares put his doubts and misgivings on record. But one such is Rep. John B. Orr, Jr., of Dade County, who voted against the variety of racist bills passed last summer by the Florida legislature. His was the only vote in opposition. He made an extensive speech before the state house of representatives explaining his position. The following are excerpts from it:

"I believe . . . that had we devoted as much energy, time and talent to discovering means to live under the law instead of in defiance of it, we could have discovered a way . . . .

"I believe segregation is morally wrong. The existence of second-class citizens is repugnant to our great democratic principles. . . .

"In recent years we have made much economic progress in the South. I believe this has been due, in part, to the elimination or reduction of discrimination in many fields. . . .

"But perhaps the most dangerous by-product of our activity in this special session and of the political campaigns that preceded it . . . is the attitude of disrespect for our laws and the principles of common decency that is developing . . . The development of this kind of attitude will surely weaken the moral fiber of our government and of our community life. For us to set an example of hyprocrisy and deceit . . . will surely do more harm to our children than will result from their being seated in a classroom next to one whose skin is of a different hue."

Victory in Montgomery, Louisville Cases

(Continued from Page 1.)

tents and purposes, continued 100 per cent solid.

In Louisville, state's attorney A. Scott Hamilton had kept charges against Carl and Anne Braden and others on the books by constantly promising to prove who had dynamited the home of Andrew E. Wade. Vernon Bown, despite affidavits proving him to be elsewhere at the time, was charged with the bombing. The others conspired with him, according to the Hamilton theory.

But on Nov. 20, the date set for Bown's trial, Hamilton dropped all charges gainst the defendants after Judge L. R. Curtis refused to allow allegedly subversive books to be introduced as evidence.

Since Judge Curtis presided over the sedition trial of Carl Braden in 1954, when a carnival of professional informers and a whole library of books were presented, the change in climate in Louisville is obvious. One aspect of the situation, however, remains in dispute: Wade is fighting foreclosure of the $11,300 house by the building and loan company. Because of the dispute over ownership the house still remains unrepaired.

TV Tale for Tots

(Continued from Page 1.)

people buy pies. Some of them, after reading the weekly, told the pie company they did not like what had happened to Virgie. Apparently the pie company talked to WDSU-TV for the next Sunday Virgie received her dog. It was presented in the Studio on Captain Sam's regular Sunday TV program.

And so we congratulate the frightened men at WDSU for correcting an injustice to a beautiful and intelligent child. And we bow to the **Louisiana Weekly** for its story which resulted in this little drama having a happy ending.

How Kentucky Town Rallied to Beat Citizens Council

By ANNE BRADEN

HENDERSON, Ky.—White ministers and other determined citizens of Henderson have demonstrated how decisive community action can stop the White Citizens Council. Courageous action by white and Negro people kept Henderson from becoming another Clay or Sturgis—communities in which the Negro people struggled bravely but virtually alone.

A community of 20,000, Henderson—like Clay and Sturgis—is in western Kentucky. This section was a part of the Confederacy, and Henderson is steeped in Southern tradition.

This fall the Weaverton School in Henderson admitted five Negro children to the elementary grades. Classes were held without incident for three weeks. Then the disorders in Clay and Sturgis, just 35 and 40 miles away, had repercussions in Henderson.

A state leader of the WCC came here and organized a meeting attended by an estimated 1,500 persons. A white boycott of Weaverton School was voted, and at one point it was more than 75% effective. Sound trucks roamed the streets urging parents to keep children out of school. Angry crowds gathered at the school each morning and violence threatened.

But the determining factor in Henderson was that people opposed to mob action had moved just as quickly as the WCC. They acted before the thing that has happened in so many communities could happen in Henderson—before the WCC could create such hysteria that each man and woman opposing segregation would feel that he stood alone and would fear to speak out.

On the day that the initial WCC meeting was announced on the radio, the Henderson Ministerial Asso. called an emergency meeting. Leadership in this decisive action came from two white ministers, the Rev. C. Sumpter Logan, president of the association and pastor of First Presbyterian Church, and the Rev. Theodore Braun, pastor of Zion Evangelical & Reformed Church.

The association agreed on a public statement pointing out that desegregation is the law of the land and calling for law and order in Henderson. They went to the WCC meeting in a body to read the statement. There were boos and hisses, but the statement had a dampening effect.

On the first day of the boycott, 280 white children out of 870 remained in school. The next day enrollment reached the low point, 206. Meantime the Ministerial Asso. was broadcasting appeals to parents to keep their children in school. The association also called meetings of parents whose children stayed in school.

These meetings were well attended; parents shared with each other their reasons for shunning the boycott and went away strengthened. Negro parents also attended the meetings, and white parents learned first-hand of their position on the question of integration.

Within a week, the boycott was broken. Within three weeks it had collapsed and WCC leaders were resigning. Some of them issued a public statement that "due to the fact that the majority of the people in Henderson want mixed schools, by showing no support to the WCC, we . . . hereby resign. . ."

A number of factors helped tip the balance against the boycott. The Henderson police chief pledged to protect children who remained in school. The state attorney general ruled that the school board could not legally reverse the process of desegregation. He warned that boycott leaders could be prosecuted.

But it is doubtful that any of these factors would have operated if the ministers had not organized strong, grass-roots opposition to the boycott. The attorney general's stand was a reversal of his position on Clay and Sturgis, where he said Negro pupils were in the formerly all-white schools illegally.

One Henderson white woman summed it up this way in explaining why she and her husband, both native Southerners, kept their child in school: "There were some of us on our side just as determined as those on the other side. And we were able to organize so that we were not alone."

There is another significant factor. Some years ago, Henderson was run by politicians in close alliance with a gambling syndicate. The government was corrupt. These politicians were ousted a few years ago by a reform government. When opposition to school integration developed some of the old allies of the gamblers were conspicuous among the leadership. This caused many white people who did not actually favor desegregation to join those opposing the WCC—because they did not want those elements to regain power.

In Clay and Sturgis, too, the potential for opposition to the WCC exists. There the WCC has temporarily won; mobs drove nine Negroes from the high school in Sturgis and four from the elementary school in Clay. But the white communities are not as solid as newspaper accounts would indicate.

In Clay, the principal, Mrs. Irene Powell, kept the school open throughout a 100% boycott. Just before the attorney general ruled that the Negroes must withdraw, a number of white parents told Mrs. Powell they were planning to send their children back to school.

"I just believe—I hope," Mrs. Powell said somewhat wistfully, "that if we get a court order, our people will respect the law."

In Sturgis, at least one white minister, the Rev. Walter T. Jones, a Methodist, preached a sermon against segregation at the height of the hysteria. Many white citizens in Sturgis now speak with shame of what happened in their community.

The saddest part of the Clay-Sturgis story, however, is that Negro parents and children who defied death threats by mobs to attend school do not realize or believe there is any potential support in the white community.

There is an element of greatness about these Negroes—people like Mrs. Louise Gordon, young mother of the two little children who sat alone in Clay school for a week. A tiny woman, Mrs. Gordon held her head high as she declared: "They made my children withdraw, but I knew in my heart I had won. I knew I had done what was right; I had injured no one; and I knew that someday they must admit our children to the Clay school."

The Clay and Sturgis story is not ended. The NAACP filed suit for re-admission of Negro pupils, and a hearing was set for Dec. 12 in federal court. Eventually they will undoubtedly win in the courts. Whether the potential of decency that exists in Clay and Sturgis will be organized and mobilized—as it was in Henderson—remains to be seen.

Inter-Civic Council In Need of Funds

In Tallahassee, Fla., the Inter-Civic Council's six-month boycott of city buses is near an end as a result of the Supreme Court decision, but the organization now is desperately seeking to raise funds for the legal defense of its leadership. On Oct. 20 a state court convicted 21 council members on charges of operating an illegal transportation system. They were each fined $500, given 60-day suspended jail sentences and put on probation for a year. Money to appeal this verdict is urgently needed.

By the time this issue of the Patriot arrives, you will have received a letter from Aubrey Williams, president of the SCEF, giving you an opportunity to make a Christmas contribution to the courageous people of Tallahassee.

Methodists Exchange Racial Views

Channels of communication between white and Negro Methodists in the South were opened wider when almost 200 ministers and lay leaders of the church met here November 15-16 for an Interracial Leadership Conference.

The conference was called by Negro and white bishops in this area and conducted under auspices of the Methodist Church's Board of Social and Economic Relations. A. Dudley Ward, board secretary, said similar conferences have been held in four Northern cities but this was the first in the South. Conferences are planned for other Southern cities.

Delegates spent two days in workshops in which. they exchanged ideas on the church's responsibility in dealing with segregation in housing, education, recreation, churches, and employment. The discussions were based on a survey of interracial problems in Louisville prepared by University of Louisville sociologists. The conclusion of this survey was that the church can do what the law cannot do—make integration work by touching men's hearts and minds.

A number of specific recommendations for church action on segregation came out of the conference. But perhaps its greatest value was that the white churchmen heard their Negro brothers speak more frankly than they ever had before. As Bishop J.W.E. Bowen of Atlanta told the gathering: "I hear people in the South boast that they understand the Negro. But let me tell you, friends, they don't."

In every workshop, it was apparent that it was the Negroes who were urging atcion now, the whites who were constantly saying: "But we must be cautious." But the white delegates were listening; many were searching their souls. A typical remark was made by a young white minister who rose in a workshop to say the main trouble was "an anemic ministry and an inadequate religion; we haven't caught up with something that happened 2,000 years ago." Negro delegates left the conference feeling that action would result from it.

Books for Christmas

GEORGE W. CABLE, a biography by ARLIN TURNER, Duke University Press, Durham, N. C., $6.00.

At the top of our list we put this biography of one of the South's most distinguished literary figures. Cable, a native of New Orleans, and an officer in the Confederate army, waged, almost singlehandedly, a crusade against the white supremacy movement in his day. He opposed the gradualism and compromises of a Booker T. Washington and a Henry W. Grady and maintained there could be no middle ground between slavery and free citizenship. His words are as timely as the morning newspaper. In addition to a colorful portrait of a great prophetic figure, Dr. Turner has produced a fascinating picture of New Orleans and the South. This is biography that reads like fiction,—a book you will find difficult to put down.

* * *

A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE NEGRO IN AMERICA, by LANGSTON HUGHES and MILTON MELTZER; Crown Publishers, 410 4th Ave., New York 16, N. Y., $5.95.

Four hundred and fifty years ago of Negro history in America beginning with the voyages of Columbus and ending with the Montgomery bus protest,—are spanned by this beautiful book.

The story is presented largely by means of a superb collection of 1,000 illustrations with the narrative by one of America's most gifted and beloved writers and poets, Langston Hughes.

* * *

INTEGRATION, NORTH and SOUTH, by DAVID LOTH and HAROLD FLEMING, Fund for the Republic, 60 East 42nd St., N. Y., $.40c.

You may consider this an odd title for our Christmas list, but if you reflect that the heart of the Christmas message is the publication of "glad tidings," then surely this is appropriate. It is an inventory of hopeful incidents since 1954, by States, in education, employment, housing, recreation, and health facilities.

This is a good occasion for a special Christmas greeting to the Fund for the Republic. No other organization has done more to make possible the publication of "glad tidings" this past 2 years.

THE BIOLOGICAL BASIS OF HUMAN FREEDOM, by THEODOSIS DOBZHANSKY, Columbia University Press, $2.95.

Your philosophical friends will welcome this slender, provocative volume by a world-famous biologist. The author's viewpoint in set forth in the jacket, "The view of Nature, red in tooth and claw,' in which every living being has only the alternative 'to eat or be eaten,' is just as unfounded as the sentimentalist view that all is sweetness and light in unspoiled nature."

* * *

SEVEN STARS FOR CATFISH BEND, by BEN LUCIEN BURMAN, illustrated by ALICE CADDY, Funk & Wagnalls, $2.75.

The writings of Ben Burman on the bayous, the Delta Country, and the reaches of the Mississippi are part of the rich folk lore of our country. If your friends know him, they will welcome this addition to their library, if not, this is an opportunity to introduce them to a charming animal fable. The characters include Judge Black, the vegetarian black snake; the frog, conductor of the Indian Bayou Glee Club; the sleepy, watchman goose; and Doc Raccoon, mayor of Catfish Bend,—all wonderful people —come to think of it, this fantasy, wrapped together with Dr. Dobznansky's essay, would make a nice, albeit somewhat different, Christmas package.

THE SOUTHERN PATRIOT published monthly except July and August by **The Southern Conference Educational Fund, Inc.** Office of publication, 150 Tenth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. Editorial and Executive Offices, Room 404, 822 Perdido Street, New Orleans 12, La. Twenty-five cents a copy, $2.00 a year. Entered as second-class mail matter, Nashville, Tennessee.

THE SOUTHERN CONFERENCE EDUCATIONAL FUND, INC.

AUBREY WILLIAMS.....President
DR. HERMAN A. LONG.....Vice-Pres.
BISHOP EDGAR A. LOVE.....Vice-Pres.
MRS. ANDREW W. SIMKINS....Vice-Pres.
ALVA W. TAYLOR.....Secretary
HERMAN MIDLO.....Treasurer
DR. JAMES A. DOMBROWSKI....Director

Southern Conference Educational Fund, Inc.
822 Perdido Street, New Orleans 12, Louisiana